Planned Parenthood: Providing Health Care and Sex Education Through Technology

At Planned Parenthood, we’re continually looking for innovative and creative ways to deliver sexual and reproductive health care education and services – no matter when or where you are. Our integrated and award-winning digital tools make us a leader in using technology to make health care and sex education more accessible.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America was named a 2019 Most Innovative Company in Education by Fast Company for providing young people with easy access to sex education tools online. In 2018, we were selected by Fast Company as a Most Innovative Company on the Top 10 Most Innovative Companies in Design, and in 2017, Planned Parenthood was recognized as one of Rock Health’s Top 50 in Digital Health as the Most Tech-Friendly Provider.

Whether it’s making something new or reimagining an aspect of our core work, our innovation is driven by listening to the people we serve.

Roo

The first chatbot of its kind, Roo is designed to help young people visiting PlannedParenthood.org get personalized health information instantly, any time. Teens can anonymously ask Roo questions – no matter how awkward – about their health, body, relationships, consent, getting care at Planned Parenthood, or choose from a list of questions and get the answers they need within seconds, day or night. No judgment, no shame, and no embarrassment. Roo was a winner of Fast Company’s 2019 World Changing Ideas and Innovation by Design awards.

Chat/Text

Through Roo, our website or via text, young people can have live conversations with trained educators via Planned Parenthood’s Chat/Text program – reaching them with critical information about sexual health when they’re in need of fast, confidential help. We’ve had more than one million conversations since the Chat/Text program started in 2010 and 1 in 3 Chat/Text conversations have led to a health center visit. Research also shows a greater use of condoms with another method of birth control and increased familiarity with the most effective reversible birth control methods among users.
**Telemedicine Abortion**

Planned Parenthood is proud to offer medication abortion (also known as the “abortion pill”) via health-center-to-health-center telemedicine in 14 states. By distributing medication safely and effectively through a health-center-to-health-center telemedicine program, we’re expanding people’s access to abortion early in pregnancy, especially for patients living in more remote and rural communities.

**Planned Parenthood Direct**

The Planned Parenthood Direct telehealth app allows users to get birth control delivered to them, have prescriptions for UTI treatments sent to a nearby pharmacy, or make appointments at a health center from their smartphone. The app helps reduce the barriers that make accessing health care services in the United States difficult – like time, distance, office hours, and the availability of appointments. Free and easy to use, Planned Parenthood Direct is now available in over half of U.S. states and will be live across the country by the end of 2020.

**Spot On**

Spot On is Planned Parenthood’s free period tracker and birth control app. Spot On helps users track their periods and manage their birth control, empowering them to take control of their sexual health – with guidance, tips, and fun facts from Planned Parenthood experts. Planned Parenthood is committed to patient privacy and security – data is stored locally on each user’s phone, so only the user has access to it. Spot On won a 2017 Fast Company Innovation by Design Award, and was selected as a Gold Honoree for Best Mobile App in the ninth annual Shorty Awards.

**Educational Videos**

Our YouTube channel is home to hundreds of engaging and informative videos about sexual and reproductive health, including videos modeling healthy communication for young people around consent and safer sex and STIs, as well as on the basics of caring for your vagina and vulva. Our video series for parents and caregivers support conversations about bodies, gender, identities, sex, and relationships in developmentally appropriate ways with preschool, elementary-, and middle school-aged children.
Planned Parenthood Online

Planned Parenthood’s websites provide sexual and reproductive health information to visitors, including teens, parents, and educators. Planned Parenthood websites, including Planned Parenthood en Español, received an estimated 180 million visits in 2019 and are designed to help users access the information and resources they need on topics ranging from abortion, birth control, STDs (or STD prevention), sexual orientation and gender.

Planned Parenthood’s Tumblr, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram pages are updated weekly with information and answers to visitors’ health questions.

Online Appointment Scheduling

Planned Parenthood patients at nearly 600 health centers can schedule their appointments at any time, including evenings and weekends, through online appointment scheduling.

Since launching online appointment scheduling in 2014, Planned Parenthood patients have booked more than five million appointments online.

Many Planned Parenthood health centers offer same-day appointments online and extended health center hours, which means people can get the care they need, when they need it.

Abortion Care Finder

The Abortion Care Finder helps people locate the nearest Planned Parenthood health centers that can provide them with a safe, legal abortion based on their location, age, and how far along they are in their pregnancy. The tool provides personalized, easy-to-understand information about users’ options, available financial assistance, any state requirements that would mean two trips to a health center and/or parental notification or consent, and how to make an appointment at a Planned Parenthood health center.